

Maine CDC WIC Nutrition Program

Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Allowable Costs

Allowable Costs

General Note: Allowable cost determinations for a particular State agency will be made within the context of reviewing the State's implementation plan to ensure that all components of the *Loving Support Model* for a successful peer counseling program are included, and that an appropriate balance between direct service delivery by peer counselors and the purchase and use of equipment and materials is in evidence.

✱ **Is childcare an allowable cost under the peer counseling funds?**

No, childcare is not an allowable WIC cost.

✱ **Can the peer counseling funds be used to train peer counselors to become International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLC's)?**

The research recommends that peer counselors be provided career path options (e.g., training/experience to become senior level peer counselors; advanced training to become lactation consultants, etc.); therefore, the funds can be used for this purpose. However, the priority use of these funds is to hire and train peer counselors to provide breastfeeding peer counseling services to WIC participants. We would not expect to see an implementation plan heavily focused on training IBCLCs.

✱ **Can the peer counseling funds to be used to enhance our IBCLC infrastructure?**

One of the components of the *Loving Support Model* is the provision of adequate program support of peer counselors through timely access to breastfeeding coordinators and other lactation management experts for assistance with problems outside the scope of practice of the peer counselor. Therefore, funds can be used to strengthen the availability of lactation management experts available to peer counselors. However, the funds cannot be used to disproportionately hire and train lactation management experts versus peer counselors. The priority use of these funds is to hire and train peer counselors to provide breastfeeding peer counseling services to WIC participants. We would not expect to see an implementation plan heavily focused on hiring IBCLCs.

✱ **Can we purchase breastfeeding incentive items with these funds for the purpose of encouraging our moms to breastfeed? Can funds be used to develop hospital discharge bags to give to moms in the hospital?**

No. The intent of the funds is to enhance WIC breastfeeding support services to WIC participants through peer counseling, not to pay for incentive items and other materials for WIC participants. Regular NSA or other funds should be used for this purpose. The peer counselor can, however, provide these items to WIC participants in the course of her peer counseling contacts with them.

✱ **Would it be an allowable cost to produce a handout on the peer counseling program to publicize the efforts?**

The funds can be used to produce and distribute a handout to educate WIC participants about the peer counseling program. However, educational materials to promote breastfeeding are to be paid out of regular NSA funds.

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- * **Can program indirect costs be included as allowable expenses?**

Yes.

- * **Can we purchase shirts that identify the staff as peer counselors with this money?**

Yes; however, these funds are primarily to be used to provide breastfeeding support services through peer counseling to WIC participants, not simply to purchase items and materials.

- * **Can the funds be used to install a phone line or purchase answering machines, prepaid cell phones, or pagers for peer counselors?**

Yes.

- * **Can we buy breastfeeding resources for the peer counselor coordinator/supervisor with this money? Can we buy resources for other WIC clinic staff?**

Breastfeeding resources for the peer counselor coordinator/supervisor may be purchased with this funding only if the resources are related to peer counseling, e.g., training manuals for peer counselors. Otherwise, breastfeeding resources for peer counselor supervisors and other WIC staff should be paid for through regular NSA funds.

- * **Can our nutrition coordinator perform the duties of a peer counselor manager/coordinator if we then hire someone else to perform the nutrition coordinator duties with other WIC funds?**

Yes. This would be a proper use of the funds because the State agency is designating a peer counselor manager/coordinator where there was not one previously

- * **Can our paraprofessional nutrition educator, who meets the definition of peer counselor as outlined in the *Loving Support Model*, perform the duties of a peer counselor with this money if we then hire someone else to do her nutrition educator job duties with other WIC funds?**

Yes. If she meets the definition of peer counselor in the *Loving Support Model* and receives the appropriate training, the funds can be used to pay her salary.

- * **Can funds be used to hire a peer counselor to staff a breastfeeding hotline? And can the funds be used to pay for expenses related to the hotline?**

Funds can be used to hire a peer counselor to answer calls to a hotline or call center if the peer counselor meets the definition of peer counselor and receives the appropriate training and supervision as outlined in the *Loving Support Model*. Expenses related to the hotline/call center are allowable for any portion of those expenses that are for the purpose of a peer counselor providing participant contacts.

- * **Can the funds be used to purchase portable cribs for peer counselors who bring**

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their babies to work?

No. The peer counseling funds cannot be used to purchase equipment/materials for the infants of peer counselors.

 **Can we purchase furniture and computers for peer counselors?**

The primary purpose of the funds is to provide breastfeeding support services through peer counseling to WIC participants. The funds can be used to purchase office equipment and furniture if these items are necessary to provide these services.